

GOVERNOR FRAZIER'S
OPENING SPEECH

Democracy's Standard-Bearer Gives Convincing Account of His Stewardship.

Masterly Review of His Party's Splendid Record in Tennessee—Attacks of Candidate Littleton Answered With Vigor—Election Laws Were Enacted in the Interest of a Pure Ballot.

The first gun of the gubernatorial campaign in Tennessee was fired at Jackson on Monday. Gov. Frazier made no apologies for the record either of his or former Democratic administrations, and the following is what he had to say:

Ladies and Gentlemen—Two years ago the people of Tennessee honored me by electing me governor of my native State by nearly 40,000 majority. After nearly two years of service I come before you today to lay at your feet the high commission with which you honored me, to render to you an account of my stewardship, and if I have discharged with fidelity the sacred trust committed to my hands to ask of you a vote of confidence and approval.

I come as the representative and nominee of the Democratic party, which has, with a single interval of two years, controlled the government and administered the affairs of Tennessee from 1870 to 1904. Whatever of good has been accomplished for the people by legislation or administration during that long period the Democratic party is entitled to the credit of it.

No party and no individual is perfect; every party and every individual makes mistakes, but I assert without fear of successful contradiction that during this long period of ascendancy the Democratic party, which is the people's party, has given to Tennessee the best, the wisest, the most economical and efficient government the State has ever enjoyed. If this was not true the Democratic party could not have won the confidence and retained the respect and approval of the people.

I assert it, and I propose to prove it, notwithstanding the chiquinquin criticisms of politicians seeking votes, under Democratic rule Tennessee is one of the best governed and one of the cheapest governed States of this entire Union. I do not come with any apology for the record of my party in the past; none is needed. I do not come, as my competitor came in his opening speech at Rutledge, apologizing for the sins and iniquities of his party when it was in power in Tennessee. Admitting that it had plundered and oppressed the people; that its government "was not a good government" and begging that the people would throw over its sins, its wrongs, its injustice and its iniquities, the mantle of forgetfulness and forgiveness. The people may forgive a party with such a self-confessed record for the sins of the past, but they dare not trust it with government in the future.

The Democratic party comes not asking for pardon and forgiveness for past wrongs, but, conscious of the rectitude of its purpose, it comes with a clean record of wise, faithful and economical government, and upon that record appeals with confidence to the judgment of a just and generous people, whose interests it has served with unwavering fidelity.

What is the record of the Democratic party in Tennessee and what are some of the things which it has accomplished which entitles it to the confidence and support of the people?

When it came into power it found the State in wreck and ruins; its credit gone, its treasury empty, and its people bowed down in poverty and ashes, struggling under the burdens of unjust and excessive taxation imposed upon them by the Republican party. It found the rate of taxation 60 cents on the \$100, and still the people's charities were neglected, the interest on the public debt unpaid, and the State bankrupt.

It found that during the reign of the Republican party from 1862 to 1870 the State debt had been increased by that party by the grossest and most glaring frauds, from \$10,000,000 to the appalling sum of \$41,000,000. It found that the Republican party had laid its dirty hands on the school fund, which had been bequeathed by the fathers as a sacred heritage to the children of Tennessee, and had used a part of it to pay the current expenses of the State and the balance they had ruthlessly squandered and wasted, so that the State was without public schools or the money with which to maintain them.

It found that the convict lease system had been fastened on the penitentiary, and still it was costing the taxpayers of the State annually more than \$100,000.

It found that the intelligence, the wealth, the flower of the State's splendid manhood, had been disfranchised and denied a voice in the government of their own affairs, while ignorant negroes and carpet-bag adventurers largely did the voting, levied the taxes, squandered the money and trampled upon the rights of the people. The Democratic party met the problem with these conditions presented in a brave and manly spirit and solved

\$16,500,000. This was accomplished over the opposition of the Republican party, which during the administration of Gov. Hawkins sought to fasten on the people their 100-3 and their 60-6 bills, which if allowed to stand, would have impoverished the people and bankrupted the State.

In 1899 a Democratic legislature passed, and my predecessor, Gov. McMillin, approved, a sinking fund law, which provided that 10 per cent. of the gross receipts of the State should be applied to the payment of the public debt, and that any surplus over and above the current expenses remaining at the end of the year should also be turned into the sinking fund to be applied to the retirement of the bonded indebtedness.

Under the operation of these laws, passed by the Democratic party, there has been paid a floating indebtedness of \$550,000 and bonds to the amount of \$1,673,500 have been cancelled and retired, thus reducing the interest-bearing obligation of the State \$2,523,500. Since I became your governor something more than a year and a half ago, there has been purchased and retired \$485,900 of bonds. Thus, by the wisdom and splendid statesmanship of the Democratic party, has this great and vexed problem finally been solved, and the debt is being paid at the rate of more than a third of a million dollars a year, the amount already retired making an annual saving in interest to the people of more than \$5,000.

The State's credit has been restored and maintained, and stands today in the money markets of the world among the first of the States of the Union. I believe that the public debt, which had rested for so long as a burden upon the people and has hampered the progress and retarded the material development of the State, should be paid with reasonable rapidity, and I have insisted and shall insist that at least 10 per cent. of the gross receipts of the State shall be thus applied. But I do not believe the payment of this debt should be pressed so as to lay undue burdens of taxation upon this generation, who did not create the debt, and who received no direct benefits therefrom, and who are therefore under no more obligations to pay it than the generations which are to come after them.

Nor should it be urged to the neglect of the other fair and just demands of the State that are pressing and imminent. When I came into office I found that under the operations of that part of the sinking fund act allowing the surplus to be turned into the sinking fund the State was applying over 20 per cent., or more than one-fifth of its entire income, to the payment of the public debt. I found at the same time that the average terms of the public schools of the State, where the sons and daughters of the great mass of the farmers and working people must get their education, if they get any at all, were only open on an average of ninety-three days in the year, and in many of the counties of the State less than seventy-five days.

I found also that there were hundreds of thousands of old, maimed and helpless ex-Confederate soldiers, whose records were clean and who were entitled to pensions under the law, but who could not be placed on the rolls for want of funds with which to pay them; and I said these debts which a grateful people owe to these old soldiers and which we owe to these bright-faced boys and girls are sacred and pressing, and must be paid now.

The debt of the bondholder, which is not due for nearly ten years, can wait. These boys and girls, who are to make the future manhood and womanhood of the State and are to be the chief factors in the development of its resources and the production of its wealth, and who will in a few years take charge of its affairs, shape its policies and determine its destiny, must be trained, educated and made intelligent citizens now, or it will be too late.

To these old Confederate soldiers who sacrificed their fortunes, their hopes and their health at the call of their State must be extended the helping hand of a generous and patriotic people now, or it will be too late. A few more years and they will be gone and there will remain only the memory of their splendid courage and heroic devotion to duty.

As between the old soldier and the 800,000 bright-faced school children who need the state's help on the one side, and the bondholders upon the other, I said, and repeat it here, let the bondholder wait. I recommended to the legislature that the appropriations for pensions to ex-Confederate soldiers be increased, and they were increased \$50,000, making the total appropriate

them all, with credit to itself, with satisfaction to the people and to the everlasting good of the State.

When the Democratic party came into power it faced a debt of \$41,000,000 and an empty treasury. By a wise and just compromise that vast debt was reduced from \$41,000,000 to about \$200,000 for that purpose \$200,000. Under the operations of this law the pension list has been increased from 1,574 to 2,252. The pathway of nearly 700 old heroes has been made smoother and their declining years brighter and happier during my administration.

I also recommend that the sinking fund law be amended so as to apply to the purchase and retirement of bonds 10 per cent. of the gross receipts of the State and the saved interest, and that any surplus that might remain in the treasury at the end of the year after the payment of all the current obligations of the State, be turned into the school fund and be distributed among the several counties of the State in proportion to the scholastic population for the benefit of the public schools of the counties. Under law passed upon this subject by the last legislature, there was applied to the school fund on the first day of January, 1904, \$271,000, or 25 cents for every child of school age in the State of Tennessee.

That law was intended particularly to help the country schools, and I am glad to know that it is helping them. Our city schools, as a rule, are

well equipped and have funds arising from municipal taxes sufficient to run them nine months in the year, but our country schools, for want of funds, are poorly equipped and of short terms. This is not as it should be. More than three-fourths of our people live in country or village. We are an agricultural people.

They pay their taxes and contribute their full share to the wealth and prosperity and greatness of the Commonwealth. The sons and daughters of these sturdy farmers need and ought to have the same advantages of education as their neighbors who live in the cities. Under the operation of this and other laws passed by the last legislature, there has been a marked improvement in the public schools of this State.

The terms have been materially lengthened, the attendance increased and the general efficiency improved. In a republic like ours the universal education of all the children of all the people is the only safeguard for the perpetuity of our free institutions, and the surest guaranty of the future wealth and greatness of the State. And any man or any candidate who sneers at public education and whose politics would tear down rather than build up, who, either from ignorance or want of interest, cares nothing for the growth and improvement of this great department of the State government, which comes so close to the homes and is of such vital importance to our citizenship, is not a wise counselor or a safe guide of the people.

You know, that the Democratic party passed, and is enforcing, what is known as the uniform text book law. My competitor opposes that law, as he does nearly every other law that has been passed by the Democratic party for the good of the people. He made a speech at Rutledge on the 4th of July, and had it published and sent broadcast over the State, that is so full of misstatements, falsehoods, and slanders of the Democratic party that I cannot allow it to pass unchallenged. As this speech was carefully prepared and widely published, it was, of course, intended to state the case for my competitor and his party and I accept it as such. Upon it he must stand or fall. He cannot escape from it, and no amount of squirming or explaining can relieve him.

My competitor opposes the uniform text book law and, of course, favors

its repeal. Let us look at that law for a moment. It provides for a uniform system of school books over the whole State to be selected every five years by a commission appointed from the State board of education, and to be let to the lowest bidders, after open competition.

This law has saved, and is saving, the people of Tennessee hundreds of thousands of dollars every year. Under the adoption made five years ago, there was a saving of nearly 30 per cent. on the prices of books, which the people had been paying before that law was passed. Under the recent adoption there is a saving of 17 per cent. over the prices paid under the former adoption, making a saving of at least 45 per cent. on the prices the people were paying for school books under the old system. In other words, your child is getting his school books at a little more than half what he was paying before this law was passed.

There were enrolled in the public schools of the State last year 492,779 children. If each child should buy only \$1 worth of books in a year, there would be a net saving to the people of \$221,750 in a single year. That is only one of the many benefits of this law. It gives uniformly throughout the State, and insures better classification and better instruction in the schools.

Under the law the books, when adopted, are good in any county in the State, and a family moving from one county to another, or from the country to the city, does not have to buy new books, as under the old system, where every county and city was likely to have, and generally did have, a different set of books. The adoption is made for five years, and no change can be made in that time, and hence books can be handed down from child to child, thus effecting a great saving to the citizen.

More than half of the States in the Union now have the uniform text book system in some force. Its value and its saving to the people have been proven by experience beyond the possibility of cavil. What are the grounds of objection to this law? They say it is a trust. If so, it is one which the State, by its strong arm, has gotten by the throat and forced to disgorge and sell its books to the school children of Tennessee 45 per cent. cheaper than it did before this law was passed.

But my competitor says, "They have deprived the parents of children of the right to say what books their boys and girls may read and study." Why, my countrymen, there never was a system of either public or private schools under which the parent selected the books his children were to study. Under the system in effect in Tennessee before the passage of this law the county superintendents selected the books to be used in the county, and the city superintendents selected the books for the cities, and nearly every county and city in the State had a different set of books. That was bad enough, but how could any school be carried on where each parent selected the books for his own child? Each child might have a different book, and hence be in a class to himself.

If the suggestion did not come from a distinguished candidate for governor, I would say it was appalling in its silliness. My competitor wants to repeal this law and leave the book concerns free to extort upon the people in every county in the State as they did before this law was passed. I say it is a wise and beneficial law, and should be retained and the people given the benefit of its immense savings.

Not content with this attack upon the laws affecting the public schools of the State, my competitor has seen fit, for some reason which it is difficult to understand, to attack, to misrepresent and to slander the University of Tennessee. While this college is gov-

erned by a self-perpetuating board of thirty trustees, of which the State has only four ex-officio members, and while the officials and trustees appear to be amply able to take care of themselves, still, as this is a semi-public institution, and the attack is so unjust and the misstatement of facts so gross and inexcusable, I feel that it is due the public to know the truth.

Mr. Littleton says the national government has given to this university to establish and maintain an agricultural and mechanical college \$1,500,000. The treasurer, himself a distinguished Republican, says it has received from the national government, through the Morrill fund and the Hatch fund, \$552,500. The gentleman's statement appears to be in round numbers just \$1,000,000 from the truth. He says it receives annually from the national government \$60,000. The treasurer says it only receives \$40,000. He says in addition to this sum the State of Tennessee has regularly and often appropriated out of our own State treasury thousands of dollars for the use and benefit of this school.

The fact is, the State of Tennessee had never given one dollar out of its treasury for this school until the last session of the legislature, and it then gave \$10,000 to buy more land for agricultural and experiment station purposes. He says that the trustees sold the farm the federal government bought for them. The treasurer says the federal government never bought or gave a foot of land to the college, but that as a condition on which the fund was given, the university had to furnish a farm, and that the land sold was outlying ridge land, unfit for agricultural purposes, which was owned by the college before it received government aid, and the proceeds were applied to building Science Hall, where engineering and the mechanical arts could be taught.

He says the money appropriated by the national government has been and is being diverted from the purpose provided by the act of congress. The treasurer says not one dollar has been so diverted, and that reports of how the money is expended are sent annually to the secretary of agriculture at Washington and by him passed upon and approved. He is a distinguished Republican official.

My competitor says the experiment station is a mere pretense and a fraud. Mr. Wilson, the Republican secretary of agriculture, says it is one of the best equipped and best conducted stations in the country, and that it is doing a great work for agriculture and the farming interests of Tennessee and the South. And there are thousands of progressive farmers over Tennessee who have received its bulletins and reports and its aid and suggestions who are ready to give like testimony.

But for fear you may think I do the gentleman an injustice, listen to what the Knoxville Journal and Tribune, the only Republican daily paper in Tennessee, and a supporter of Mr. Littleton, says:

"Where Mr. Littleton got his information, we are not prepared to say, but his statements concerning the University of Tennessee are as erroneous as they well could be. We regret that Mr. Littleton did not seek information where accurate information could be had before making statements that are so directly in conflict with the facts."

Did Mr. Littleton know the facts about this institution when he made his speech? To say that he did not would be to reflect upon his intelligence, and this I would not do. Then, what was the motive that made him ignore facts, that he might strike at this great institution of learning? Every officer in the board of trustees is a distinguished Republican who has dared to think for himself and who has resented the dominating bossism of Mr. Littleton's sponsor, the Hon. Boss Brownlow.

Judge O. P. Temple is chairman of the board; the Hon. William Rule, editor of the Knoxville Journal, is secretary; the Hon. James Maynard, the son of the distinguished Republican, the Hon. Horace Maynard, is treasurer, and the Hon. E. T. Sanford, who led the candidacy to run against Mr. Littleton for the nomination before Brownlow's convention, is chairman of the finance board. If there has been any misappropriation of funds, these are the men who are responsible for it. Why did Mr. Littleton attack them through the university? Was he ordered to do so by his "boss," or was it because Sanford dared to oppose his nomination on the grounds that he did? I leave him to answer as to these gentlemen, but as to the university, I protest that any candidate of any party who will, for some fancied partisan advantage to himself, run down, decry and misrepresent one of the great institutions of the State, which offers such advantages and is doing so much for the ambitious boys and the agricultural interests of the State, does not deserve the confidence and support of fair, honest and patriotic men of any party.

My competitor places himself on record as opposed to an agricultural department, and to the law providing for the inspection of fertilizers sold in the State. That department has been in existence since 1875, and not 1883, as stated by my competitor. It was in operation during the last Republican administration in Tennessee—in 1881 and 1882—and was during those years run at a cost to the taxpayers of the State of \$13,721, while for the last two years it has paid its entire cost of operation and turned

into the treasury \$9,527. During the Republican administration the commissioner of agriculture received a salary of \$3,000. Now his salary is \$2,500. This is the only department of the state government organized and maintained exclusively for the benefit of the farmers of Tennessee, and yet my competitor wants to abolish it.

The inspection of fertilizers is only one of the many duties of this department. It gathers data from 400 to 500 correspondents and issues free crop reports for the information and guidance of farmers. It issues free fertilizer bulletins for the use and protection of farmers.

It held last year farmers' institutes in sixty-seven counties of the State, that were attended by over 10,000 farmers. It analyzes free the soils of the farmers. It is a bureau of information for farmers seeking homes in Tennessee. It maintains a live stock inspection which has kept the national quarantine line below many of the counties of the state, and thus saved the farmers and live stock raisers more than ten times the cost of maintaining the whole agricultural department. Why, my friends, every state in this Union except two maintain an agricultural department, and every state where fertilizers are sold has it inspected.

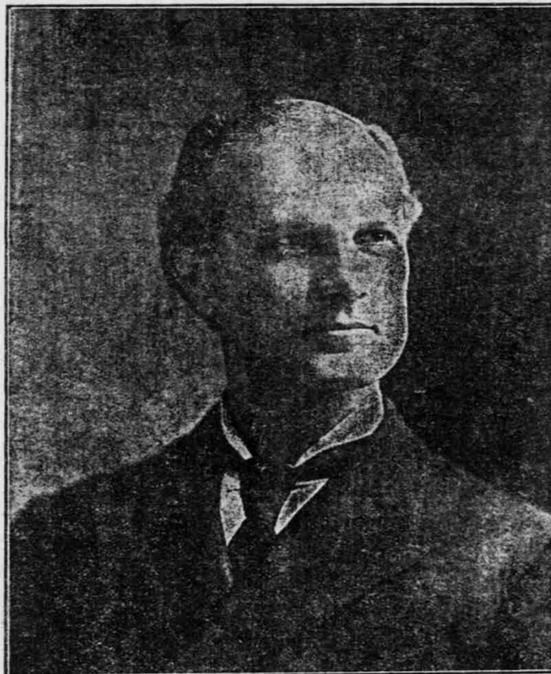
The farmers of Tennessee bought from June 1, 1903, to June 1, 1904, 32,676 tons of fertilizer at a cost of more than half a million dollars. If there had been no inspection the farmers would have had no protection and this vast sum might have been more than wasted in the purchase of spurious and worthless stuff. The gentleman says the inspections are made through cracks, and then the inspectors hasten to make out their expense account. These statements, like so many others made in that speech, are untrue and display a pitiable ignorance of the facts or a reckless disregard of truth. No appropriation is made for the expenses of the inspectors and they pay their own expenses, and no expense account is ever made out or paid. A sample of every brand of fertilizer is taken and analyzed and a record made for the use and protection of the farmers of the state.

Twenty-five samples were taken last year of twenty-five different fertilizers from Franklin county alone, the home of my competitor, and every one of them analyzed. Without these inspections and analyses the farmers of Franklin county would have been absolutely at the mercy of the fertilizer companies, who could have sold them inferior and worthless stuff and they would have had no redress.

But the gentleman says the farmers pay the inspection fees imposed by law upon the fertilizer companies. Is this true and the consumer pays the tax, when the Republican party has been for years practicing the most gigantic fraud and deception upon the farmers of this country in telling them and making some of them believe that they do not pay the tariff tax levied on the things they buy, but that the foreigner pays the tax. An honest confession is good for the Republican soul, even if it is inadvertently made. The Republican party has always contended that the foreigner paid the tariff tax, and hence it made no difference to the farmer if there was a tariff of 20 to 60 per cent on the plow, the trace chain, the coat or the hat he buys, but if it be true that he pays the tax, then it becomes important. The price of his wheat and corn and cotton and the products of his farm, everybody knows, is fixed in the open markets of the world.

He has a surplus and no amount of tariff could affect his price, while the necessities of life which he must buy have the tariff tax added on, and this he must pay. Not only that, but under the protection of the tariff laws upon which the Republican party says it stands pat and proposes to maintain even to the last schedule, these protected trusts, not only make you pay the tariff at home, but they are actually shipping their goods abroad and selling them to the foreigner cheaper than they are to you. If that be true, and it is not now disputed by well informed men, then the trust which sells certainly needs no protection, and no party deserves the support of the people who will refuse to give them relief from these unjust and unnecessary tariff taxes, under the sheltering arm of which trusts have sprung up and are flourishing as they never did before. These are some of the things my competitor stands for. If you farmers are tired of paying tributes to the protected trusts; if you do not want your agricultural bureau abolished and do not want to be left unprotected to the tender mercies of the fertilizer companies, then you do not want the things for which my competitor stands.

The finances of the State were never in better condition nor more prudent, or carefully managed. During my term of office, without raising the taxes upon the people one penny, the State has met its every obligation when due; paid the interest on its bonded debt; supported liberally its worthy charities; paid increased pensions to its old and helpless soldiers; paid for a handsome exhibit of its resources at St. Louis; paid annually more than a third of a million dollars on its bonded debt and turned a surplus of more than a quarter of a million dollars into the school fund at the end of the year. Every department of the State government has been conducted with the highest business efficiency and with scrupulous honesty and fidelity. Every dollar collected from the people has been honestly applied and



GOV. JAMES B. FRAZIER.